SPEECH OF MR. BRECK, OF KENTUCKY,

On the President's California Message.

House of Representatives, March 25, 1850.

The important questions which have recently occasion se much agitation and concern in the public mind have been so ably and elaborately disoussed, not only here and in the other end of the Capitol, but by the press throughout the country, that I can have little hope of presenting any thing new or interesting in regard to them for the consideration of the committee. In obedience, however, to the wishes, as believe, of my constituents, and in justice to myself, I feel constrained to state my views and the principles by which my course will be governed, so far as I may be called upon to act.

The great controversy is between the North and the South open the subject of slavery. And I believe, sir, it has rarely been the case for years past that any question connected with that important subject has been discussed in the American Congress without irritation and excitement. Prejudice against the institution upon the one side, and extreme sensitiveness, erising from various causes, on the other, have often rendered such discussions not only exciting, but productive of serious evil. Their tendency has been to weaken the ties and destroy that harmony and good fellowship between the North and th South so essential to our continuance as a united people.

It is my desire to say nothing which will add to the present excitement. If I cannot pour oil upon the troubled waters, I hope not to increase their agitation and violence. Our moderation and forbearance should be more signally manifested, as has been properly remarked, in proportion as the ques-

since the commencement of the present session of Congress, slavery has been the all absorbing and constant theme, not only here, but in every part of our extensive country. It has been the alpha and omega of almost every speech; and has exerted an influence, often controlling, over nearly every thing which we have done or attempted. Among other things which we have heard, it has been repeatedly sounded in ou ears that upon the satisfactory adjustment of this important controversy hangs the destiny of the republic—the fate of our various sources, some of them entitled to very grave conside-

Now, sir, if this be indeed so, then is the controversy mo No question of such transcendent importance, involving so deeply the freedom and happiness of man, has ever been or can be presented for the consideration of any legislative assembly in the civilized world. It this wide spread and happy land, upon which Heaven has showered its choicest blessings, is to be torn asunder by internal strife—if our happy system of government, which reflects immortal ho-nor upon its founders, and under which we have enjoyed a degree of freedom and prosperity and happiness unparalleled in the annals of nations, is to be broken up and overthrown— then truly may it be said that the last refuge of civil liberty, the last hope of free government, is gone.

With what intense interest is every patriot, every votary

of freedom, watching our deliberations and waiting the result. On the other hand, with what exulting joy are all the enemie of freedom and all the tyrants and oppressors of mankind, looking upon the gloomy spectacle we present; and with what a shout of triumph will they hail the sad end of this great republic! For one, sir, I cannot, will not, believe that so appalling a calamity is about to befall us; I cannot believe the we have so soon become the degenerate sons of gallant sires that we cannot or will not preserve the glorious heritage which their valor and suffering have acquired and have transmitte to us; that the spirit which united and animated the nobles race of men that ever struggled and battled for libert has become extinct in the breasts of their descendants.

It is true, sir, there are those who scout the idea that the Union is in danger, and who regard all that has been said as mere menace and bravado. I am, sir, not of that number. The country, it is true, has been in danger before. It has encountered alarming political storms and tempests, and rode them out in safety. But, sir, republics have often been the victims of delusion and passion, and we have no guaranty that we are exempt from these baneful influences.

I concur fully in the opinion expressed by the gentleman

from Louisians, (Mr. Monse,) that the omens are ill, that the times are sadly out of joint; and, I regret to say, that some expressions used by the gentleman himself furnish evidence of the correctness of that opinion. I confess, sir, after surveying the whole ground, that I have been reluctantly forced to the conclusion that the country is in imminent dan ger, and that there has been no period in its history when a spirit of conciliation and compromise, and all the efforts of patriotism, were more eminently required to prop its reeling glory, and save it from the greatest of all calamities.

The exciting questions more immediately in controver arise out of our territorial acquisitions from Mexico and slaver in this District. It has been emphatically announced in this House and elsewhere that if by any act of Congress slavery shall be inhibited in these Territories or abolished in this Dis-trict, the happening of either of these contingencies will induce immediate action in the South for its protection; or, in other words, as I believe is generally understood, will be followed by secession or revolution by a part, at all events, of the States in the South.

Now, sir, I am decidedly opposed to both these measures,

and so is the State which I have the honor in part to repreregard to her course, should they or either of them be adopted ; as there is no probability, I think, that either event will nappen, at least during the present session of Congress, un-less the admission of California as a State, with a constitution ercluding slavery, should be regarded as an equivalent act or measure, and that subject I shall notice hereafter. But, although neither of these unjust and obnoxious measures should be adopted, yet still the existing state of things is evi dently tending to a very unfortunate and alarming result. The different views and feelings entertained at the North and the South upon the subject of slavery, and the sgitation of this question in connexion with party politics, manifestly tend to sectional division in feeling and political action.

To arrest this tendency, and avert so fatal a result, should be the effort of every one who duly appreciates the importance of preserving that Union under which we have been so prosperous and happy, and have become so great and

As I was born and educated in the North, and have for more than thirty years resided in the South, or in a slaveholding State, I trust I may, with some freedom and without offence, examine this subject of slavery, and more especially in view of the opinions and feelings of the North in regard to it.

There has evidently been some new light, or, perhaps, I h more propriety say obscurity, thrown upon it since I left that section of the country. If the views and feelings which now seem to prevail were entertained in my day, or when I resided there, I could hardly have escaped their influence, and have selected a slave State for my permanent residence. It is true, I did not select Kentucky, because slavery existed there, but I am not aware that that circumstance constituted any objection. I am confident it formed no part of my education to listen to lectures upon the injustice and sin of slavery, and its continuance in the South. In those days, Abolitionists and Abolition societies—the party styling itself, par excellence, the Liberty party, and the one-idea Free-soil were unknown. These new sects have sprung up the influence of the boasted progress of the age, of party, were unknown. which we hear so much. But this progress of the age is in some respects like a high tide in our mighty rivers; it raises a vast amount of trash and rubbish, known in the West and South by the general term drift, and in the North, I believe, fined wood, which would otherwise slumber and decay in stlence upon the bank. While the tide lasts, it floats with some appearance of importance; often to the serious annoyance of the noble steamer, and other useful craft. But, whe the stream again retires within its natural channel, it ceases to annoy, and is seen no more. And such will be the inevitable destiny of those reforming sects, wise above what is written, when the current of public opinion shall become tranomi and rational.

In regard to the fanatical Abolitionists, who are struggling immediate abolition of slavery throughout the whole country and the world, reckless alike as to means and consequences, it is useless to waste a word. That sect is so lost to all the dictates of reason, justice, and humanity, that any appeal to them would be utterly unavailing. Such men are as wild and deluded as those who, a century or so ago, hung honest women for witches, and drove out honest Quakers as heretics. This happened even in the good old, and now great and splendid. Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The same delusion, although not to the same extent, prevailed in the renowned Old Dominion. And it may be possible that the fanatacism of this sect is the result of some hereditary taint or oblimity. or obliquity. I understand their number is very limited; and it will certainly become more so, should reason ever resume

the helm in their minds. But I apprehend I am not mistaken in supposing that very considerable portion of the people in the North—and by the North I include all the non-slaveholding States—entertain very erroneous pinions upon the subject of slavery, its condition, the practicability of emancipation, and in regard to the character of slave olders. The idea that it is unjust and sinful for the South to retain is servitude, instead of emancipating, their slaves -- which, I think, is a pretty generally prevailing sentimen -is certainly founded in error, and must be the result of feeling, rather than reflection, and an unprejudiced

investigation of the subject. Now, whether slavery was originally a moral wrong, is a question I shall not stop to examine : for, whether so or not, t has no more to do with the present question, in regard to slavery as it now exists, and its continuance in this country, than the fall of Adam, or original sin. I will, however, take occasion to say, that the condition of the African, brought to the Christian philanthropist has strong hopes that slavery in America may, in the providence of God, be the means of spreading the blessings of Christianity and of civil liberty throughout the most benighted, degraded, and barbarous quarter of the globe—of ultimately illuminating and civilizing

as the white and African races constitute the same commu-nity, and the latter, in point of numbers, approximate any where near the former, the safest and happiest, and, indeed, the only safe and happy relation for both races, is that of master and servant. And I am satisfied no unprejudiced mind, which will thoroughly investigate the subject, will come to a different conclusion. That relation will secure to each race or class the greatest security, and the greatest amount

of comfort and happiness. The general emancipation of slavery in the South would result, if not in the rain, greatly to the prejudice of each class, and more especially the colored. It would be an act of injustice and inhumanity to the slave, not surpassed by the people of the North turning off, helpless and destitute, upon the world, their infant children to shift for themselves. But why enlarge upon this question ' Emancipation, in a word, would be madness. What could be done with the slaves, if emancipated Would the North receive them? No. Some of the non-slaveholding States exclude them as far as possible by law, and even resort to force to break up their settlements, even when upon their own soil, and expel them. If they were to remain in the South, they would necessarily be a de-graded caste, and virtually slaves—wretched and miserable

beyond their present condition.

The boasted emancipation by Great Britain, at the expense of a hundred millions of dollars, ofher West India slaves, has proved, so far as any improvement in the condition of the blacks was contemplated, an entire failure. There are gen-tlemen on this floor, northern gentlemen, who know, and who have been interested in knowing, that a more degraded and miserable race of human beings can hardly be found upon the globe. And what is Great Britain now doing or permitting to be done' I understand that Africans by thousands, proba controversy hangs the destiny of the republic—the fate of our glorious Union. Similar assurances have reached us from are removed from the Cape of Good Hope to the West Indies, where they are held in a species of service, varying but little from the former condition of slavery in those islands.

I will not, however, dwell longer upon a proposition which will not be controverted by any one correctly informed as to the facts, and whose mind is not warped by prejudice. Bur, sir, can the people of the North be aware to what extent they would be affected on the score of interest by disturbing slavery in the South? Do they appreciate the fact that almost every interest and department of labor draws largely from the proceeds of the labor of slaves? Not the manufacturer of cotton that business, but almost every class of mechanics-also the shipping, mercantile, and agricultural or farming interest; for e prosperity of the latter depends upon the prosperous con dition of the other interests or classes. gin and almost every implement and instrument used in the culture of cotton and the cane, and all the machinery in the sugar-making process, the clothing of all kinds for slaves, the ovision to a considerable extent, and numerous other articles, e almost exclusively the product of Northern labor. It would be interesting to pursue this inquiry further in the detail, and show to what extent the North realizes the proceeds of the la-

or of slaves, but time will not permit.

If, then, as we are authorized to assume, benevolence and hilanthropy-in a word, duty-forbid any change in the institution of slavery ; and if the prosperity of the North, as well as the South, essentially depends, as it manifestly does, upon the quiet and undisturbed enjoyment of the institution by the South, upon what ground can we account, even if the consti tution were entirely out of the question, for the perpetual irritation and annovance to which the South are subjected ' De not the South and all their slaves constitute a portion of the

opulation and wealth of a common country?
Why, then, lecture the South, in this hall and over the whole North, by resolutions of conventions of all sorts and sizes--and, still worse, by resolutions of whole States, through their Legislatures—upon the injustice, curse, and sin of slavery; to say nothing of the untiring assaults of the press, in countless thousands of tracts and novels, and every other species of publication? Why, in violation of the constitution render it odious to aid the owner in the reclamation of his fu gitive slaves, and even penal for State officers to interfere Why tell the South that slavery shall never be extended, but confined to the narrowest possible limits, and for the avowed purpose of thereby forcing the South to the suicidial act of emancipation 'Such was the benevolent and generous policy avowed by the gentleman from Pennsylvania, (Mr. STEVENS.)

All this not only irritates, but senously affects, the South in the enjoyment of their constitutional rights. It is of no service, but a positive injury to the slave. It has no tendency loosen, but may render it necessary to tighten, his bonds adds nothing to the prosperity of the North, but, on the contrary, as you embarrass the South you affect your own in-

Why, sir, I have sometimes thought it strange that a people unsurpassed for intelligence and sagacity, and for an abiding, sleepless regard for their own interests, as is certainly a portion of the North, should have been so mistaken and misled upon this subject. But the marvel measurably ceases when we look

The examination of the subject has been a parts-one ided. Lecturing fanatics and vagabonds at first went through the country exhibiting, not in imagination, as has been done in this chamber, but actual chains and manacles, and the mos horrid instruments for punishment, as indicative of the savage cruelty of the master and the wretched condition of the slav They had the field entirely to themselves. The slaveholde was calumniated, denounced as an unfeeling tyrant, and the condition and treatment of the slave grossly misrepresente The subject found its way into the school-house and the pulpit; and, finally, the feeling was rendered available by the political demagogue and carried into the ballot-box. This eling has progressed till the current has become so deep and strong, that, in many instances, those who would resist if and it fraught with political danger to do so.

It is proper, and I will here take occasion to state, that, far as I have or may speak of the course of the North or South in connexion with this subject, I do not design my remarks apply indiscriminately to the whole North or South-for am aware such an application of them would be unjust-but only to such portions of either as they may be properly appli-

But, sir, the state of feeling to which I was alluding has been seized upon at the South for party purposes. Leading men in the North, with a view to render them unpopular and odious in the South, have been unjustly denounced as Abolitionists and enemies to the South. And such has been the effect of these different sectional views and feelings, that, to render a candidate acceptable to both sections, zealous and unscrupulous partisans, like pirates, have had to run him with two sets of papers, fraudulent creeds and flags, prepared to use one or

mother to suit the latitude.

To secure the election, however, of the gallant and patriotic individual now at the head of the Government, I am not

wildest fanatic is a daily participant of the necessaries, and South. The former realized the money by the traffic: the comforts, and luxuries of life, produced by slave labor; and latter desired and obtained the slaves. And what State rehe is not restrained from indulgence by any consciention

Again: the Northern creditor, to secure a debt upon southern siaveholder, without scruple takes a mortgage upon his slaves, and thereby becomes a slave-owner. He never, under such circumstances, emancipates, but sells. And no sale, I apprehend, has ever been arrested by the conscience of a Northern creditor. Of this I certainly do not complain and I have only made these allusions to show the intimate connexion between the two sections on the score of interest and that there should be no difference on the score of feeling

I look upon the present controversy as unnatural and un holy; threatening and jeoparding, as it evidently does, the safety and stability of this great Government. I believe it to be in the power of the present Congress to terminate it without any secrifice, by any party, of principle, interest, honor, or feeling. And for the purpose of presenting my views as to the mode, I desire to say something upon the important and more immediate question before the committee—the message of

The President recommends the admission into the Union of California, with the constitution submitted; and, as to the residue of the territory acquired from Mexico, he recommer the establishment of no Territorial Governments, or non-action. The latter recommendation is based upon the suppo-sition that such governments cannot be established without continued and great excitement on the subject of slavery.

There is certainly every plausible ground for this supposi-tion. An effort to establish such governments, made at each session of the last Congress, was unavailing, in consequence of this exciting question. The question is still regarded of paramount importance, and its adjustment beset with serious, but I trust not insurmounable, difficulties. The present position of California, praying admission as a State, will certainly, or ought, in my opinion, to aid in the settlement of the entire controversy, so far as these Territories are concerned. It

even Africa. Nor need I inquire whether slavery is a social of domestic evil; for, if it is, the North may aggravate, but cannot cure it.

To determine what would be right and what wrong, in regard to it, or whether it is right or wrong for the South to retain their slaves in servitude, we must look at the institution as it is, and all the circumstances attending it. Tested in this way, duty, Chris ian duty, and interest dictate the same course—and each forbids emancipation.

The result of my experience and reflection is, that so long as the white and African races constitute the same community, and the latter, in point of numbers, approximate any where near the former, the safest and happiest, and, indeed, the only safe and happy relation for both races, is that of

stances. No State has ever been admitted under precisely similar circumstances. It is true that several Territories—Michigan, Iowa, Florida, and others—formed constitutions, without any act of Congress authorizing the proceeding, and under such circumstances have been admitted; but they had organized territorial governments. Their admission, however, was irregular; and, as to some of them, grossly so. Texas was an independent sovereignty, and owed no allegiance to this or any other Government. California had no organized Territorial government, nor was she an independent soveremotive government, nor was she an independent sover-reignty. Still, I am by no means prepared to say she has been in the wrong in organizing a State government, and seeking admiss on into the Union, whether we admit her or not. When this Government, in which was vested the save-

reignty over the country by the cession from Mexico, failed to exercise it, the people of California had no alternative but

to exercise it, the people of California had no alternative but anarchy, or to form a government for themselves. Self-defence and preservation justified her in pursuing the latter course. How long was she to continue in her abandoned condition? Two sessions of Congress had passed, and there was no provision for her government and protection; and there was little probability that the efforts of the present Continue was little probability that the efforts of the present Continue was little probability. gress would be more successful. Her condition was pecu-liar. She constituted, and still constitutes, a point of greater attraction than any other in all the earth. There was a rush to her mountains of gold—an influx of population, without a a parallel in the history of man. Under such circumstances, she has formed a constitution and become a State de facto, and now asks, not in contumacy, not in derogation of our authority, but in express recognition of it, to be made a State de jure, and admitted into this great family of States. He constitution was the work, and bears the impress, of American citizens, and seems to have been adopted with singular unanimity. There is nothing to justify even a suspicion that the character of it, in reference to slavery, is the result of any extraneous influence. It sufficiently appears that it is emphatically the constitution of American citizens in California, at. the time of its adoption. It is an objection, however, entitled to consideration, that the population, although at this time

aries are too extensive. But, sir, in the eyes of all Northern gentlemen these obje tions fade away, and oppose no obstacle to her immediate admission. They are impatient for her adoption. They are anxious to take her-and no questions asked. The clause in her constitution excluding slavery covers, like a mantle, all faults and irregularities. If that clause were expunged or out, what a marvellous change would be produced in

sufficiently large, was, to a very considerable extent, unstable and unsettled—composed of individuals not there with a view to a permanent residence. It is also objected that the boun-

Well, sir, I have made up my mind, notwithstanding all the objections, and that it will be establishing a new precedent—to unite with them and admit California, and even with her designated boundary, provided they will be just and paiotic, and settle the whole controversy as to the residue

I am in favor of a measure providing for the admission I am in favor of a measure providing for the admission of California and the organization of territorial governments for the residue of California and New Mexico, without the Wilton and enticing away of her slaves, and the difficulty and the proper constitutional tribunal—the judiciary—the first instance, should the question arise; and by the people in the cond, whose authority cannot be questioned when they come o form State constitutions.

And how is it possible that the Northern gentlemen, Whigs

Democrats, can resist the settlement, in this mode, of this xciting and distracting controversy? Why leave it open for continued strife and agitation, which have already jarred the very foundations of our political edifice? Such a measure will leave the rights of all parties precisely where they are at present, or would be, if the country is left uncared for by this Government, to shift for itself as best it can. It is the outh will have most ground of objection. As to the North, a State is admitted in all respects agreeably to her wishes: in point of Territorial extent, equal or nearly so to three States of the first class, with a sea-coast extent upon the Pacific of seven or eight hundred miles, abounding in gold beyond the wildest dreams of avarice, and with a constitution excluding slavery. In comparison with this *El Dorado*, this land of gold, the residue of this Mexican territory, for which govern-

goid, the residue of this Mexican territory, for which governments are sought to be established, is of little value.

And how, sir, has this vast Mexican Territory been acquired? Whether by conquest or purchase, it has been acquired by the common valor, and suffering and treasure of the nation, and belongs to all the people—not to one State, or class of States, nor to one class of the people more than mother. Under such circumstances, it would be in violation of all the principles of justice and equality to exclude a large class from any pasticipation in the enjoyment of a country they have contributed in common to acquire; for such is the effect of this Wilmot proviso, or the inhibition of slavery. that Congress had the constitutional power. But the South denies the power. Such is the undoubting opinion of many of our most eminent statesmen and jurists, and, I think, the prevailing sentiment in the South. The South has been willing to submit the constitutional right to remove and hold their slaves in this Territory to the decision of the Supreme Court, and abide the result. And this mode of compromising and settling the question would have saved the country from all or much of this excitement.

But Northern gentlemen, with some exceptions, claim

ne power. They insist, also, that slavery is excluded by Mexican law; and contend, moreover, if it were not, that i cannot exist there without express authority of law. Every Northern man contends for this, and professes to have no doubt upon the subject. Besides all, the foremost man in all the North, and one of the foremost of all his race in any age or country, is willing to rely upon the character of the coun try, the irrepealable law of God and nature, for excluding slavery from the residue of this Territory. Upon the position assumed by Northern gentlemen, then, this proviso is wholly nnecessary and useless. But, sir, it is more, and worse than useless; it is, under the circumstances, a wanton outrage upon the feelings of the South. It indicates not only a wan of respect for their feelings, but their opinions. If, however, the South is right, and Congress has not the power, then it is not only an ourage upon their feelings, but upon their constitutional rights. Why, then, should Northern gentlemen so ertineciou-ly insist upon this offensive, and, according to their own avowed sentiments, useless provision? Why not display the magnanimity and patriotism of the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts to whom I have alluded—leave the question to be settled by the character of the country, by the Judiciary, and the people of those Territories, and relieve the country from the agitation and alarm that now per-

otic individual now at the head of the Government, I am not aware that such practices were deemed necessary. The people believed him honest, intelligent, brave, and patriotic, and as such were satisfied to elect him; and they have not and will not be deceived in him.

I desire, sir, to say a word or two more, with a view further to show the palpable inconsistency, of a portion, at all events, of the North in regard to slavery. If it is so edious in their eyes, and the existence and continuance of it are regarded as a moral wrong, as a sin, why encourage it and grow rich upon it? Why not throw overboard, as was the tea, the contaminated articles—the products of slave labor? Why, sir, the people of the North, in receiving and using the cotton, and sugar, and rice, and tobacco, knowing as they do that they are produced by the labor of slaves, give countenance and are accessories to the alleged injustice and sin, as the receiver or purchaser of stolen goods is of the theft. The wildest fanatic is a daily participant of the necessaries, and confirmed and provised the money by the traffic; the But, sir, in support of this provise, or inhibitory policy, sisted the adoption of the constitution on account of this pro-vision, or of any other in reference to slavery? It was opposed by no State on that account, so far as my recollecti

extends. If all this was the result of compromise in forming the constitution, it was a noble example, which we ought to follow for its preservation.

But the question is, what would these illustrious men now do in regard to this inhibitory pol cy, if they were now here, and could be heard in this hall? Wou'd they, under the change of circumstances, when we have more slaves than the entire population in 1775—when emancipation cannot be effected without ruin to both races—when the condition of slavery has been greatly ameliorated, and when slave labor mployed not only beneficially to our whole country but the whole world—when our territory has been vasily extend d, spreading from ocean to ocean, and acquired by the valor ed, spreading from ocean to ocean, and acquired by the value and treasure of the whole nation—would they eay, let the alien and the stranger from all countries, no matter whether Christian or Pagan, Mohammedan or Mormon, with one wife consists of ragan, Monaminedan or Mormon, with one wife or fifty, occupy in unnumbered thousands our vast unpeopled territories, and utterly exclude from every road of it their own household—every slaveholder, although bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh—the founders, and descendants of the very founders of the empire? Would they say this is justice; this is that condition to the say this is justice; this is that equality upon which our Union and Constitution were based? No, sir, no! If the shade of the most illustrious man, not only of his country but of his whole race, could arise here, it would frown upon and condemn such policy, as not only in conflict with the spirit of the constitut as not only in conflict with the spirit of the constitution, but as unjust in itself—an outrage upon the feelings and rights of the South. Would be endorse the unfeeling sentiment of the member from Pennsylvania' No, sir. His language would be, you have territory enough and to spare. Humanity, philanthropy, as well as justice and equality, the harmony and safety of the Union, forbid this restrictive policy. But, sir, the South asks no concession; what the parar law of the land secures to her is all she contends for.

versy in the way suggest elieve a proposition to that effect is now before the commit-ee—results in no triumph to any party. It ought to be most ecceptable to the North, in view of the admission of Califoracceptable to the North, in view of the admission of California. In this whole matter, however, it is proper I should say I speak only for myself; although I believe most of my colleagues are disposed to sustain a measure of the character which I have indicated. The whole country will rejoice at the settlement of this distracting controversy, and will be generally satisfied that it shall be settled in that way.

I had intended to say a few words, sir, in reply to the resources which have been most uninetly in my opinion.

flections which have been, most unjustly, in my opinion, made upon the President as to his course in reference to these Territories. He informs us he continued whatever of govern-Territories. He informs us he continued whatever of government there was in the country as he found it, and disturbed no arrangements which had existed under his predecessor. Of this I have heard no complaint. But he recommended the people, if prepared to comply with the requisitions of the constitution of the United States, to form, in effect, State constitutions and submit them to Congress with a prayer for constitutions, and submit them to Congress, with a prayer for constitutions, and submit them to Congress, with a prayer for admission as States. His motive was patriotic—the termination, as soon as possible, of the excitement in regard to the question of slavery, and by the people themselves. He found the people in a measure without government; and, at the same time, no people needed the protection of an efficient government more. He recommended them to do what, under the circumstances, self-defence and self-preservation authorized and required them to do—to form governments for themselves. This they have done, but not, it would seem, at the instance of the President, or in consequence of his recommeninstance of the President, or in consequence of his recommen-dation. The constitution of California is now before us, and whether we shall admit her or not as a State, is a question

As to the course of the President, I regard it as dictated by sound policy and the most patriotic motives. There is certainly some reason for believing that the same course, in effect, had been previously advised by his predecessor; but whether so or not, is not deemed very material, and I have no time to go into an inquiry as to the fact.

Mr. Chairman, I have been often asked what Kentucky would

do, or how she stood in the present contest, and my answer has been a very short one: That Kentucky was against has been a very snort one: I hat Kentucky was against the provise, but in favor of the Union. She seems to have full confidence in her delegation in Congress. Her Legislature has forwarded no resolutions of instruction or request. She has yet made no effort by a dollar and cent calculation to scertain the value of the Union. She regards it as priceless, and cannot, therefore, solve such a problem. The flattering estimates and golden results which some gentlemen have so minutely described as the certain fruits of disunion and a Southern Confederacy, have had not the slightest rafluence to seen her attachment to the country and the Government as they now exist. Her devotion to the constitution and to the Union rises far above such speculating and sordid calculations.

Love of liberty, of security, of independence, of the present and anticipated glory and happiness of this magnificent Republic, constitutes the basis of her devotion.

It is true, a state of case may possibly occur when h honor, her independence, her very existence, may render the Union insupportable, and revolution unavoidable. But noth-ing will ever force her to so sad and desperate a resort but the sternest necessity; and, should she ever be driven to it, the ase will be a plain one. As one of her sons remarked, in reference to the memorable shooting or falling of the stars, (as the phenomenon was called,) that he kept his eye constantly upon the north star, and concluded, if that should fall or shoot off, the hunt would be out, and that dissolution and ruin would be at hand : so, sir, when Kentucky ishall be for disunion, it may well be considered the time has come and the scene has closed.

danger in their reclamation.

We denounce, sir, and punish as pirates, those who are engaged in the African slave trade. The act of decoying from the owner his slave, and aiding him in his escape, is not less, but even more criminal. As to the owner, it is robbery and, as to the slave, inhumanity; as, in ninety-nine cases ou of a hundred, the effect is to consign him to poverty and wretchedness. It seems to me, if public sentiment in the North were not depraved in regard to the constitutional rights of the South, it would frown down this criminal practice, and that the owner would be aided, and not obstructed, in the recovery of his property.

It is to be hoped that Congress will adopt, and immediately, such measures as shall render available and efficient the constitutional provision in regard to fugitive slaves, and that the North will cordially unite in this matter, and carry out in good faith that important provision. Interest and honor, the narmony and safety of the Union, as well as the obligation imposed by the constitution, demand this, that the South may be secure in the quiet and unannoyed enjoyment of their

property.

It seems to me, sir, that an adjustment of existing difficulties and in a manner consistent with the rights and honor of all parties concerned, if honestly desired, may be easily effected. every patriot, to every one who has ever sent an aspiration to Heaven for human freedom, which should witness the resto-ration between the North and the South of that fraternal sympathy and kindness, respect and confidence, which united our ancestors in the glorious struggle for independence! It would be a sad and gloomy day only for demagogues, and fanatics,

The number who seek revolution or dissolution, per se, for the sake of dissolution, whether in the North or the South, must be confined to fanatics. Possibly there may be those who seek it for self-aggrandizement, to gratify a reckless and unhallowed ambition. To such, it any, I would apply the ithering invocation of the poet:

"Is there not some chosen curse, Some hidden thunder in the stores of Heaven, Red with uncommon wrath, to blast the man Who would owe his greatness to his country's ruin?"

Mr. Chairman, if allowable, I would say, in conclus tha', personally, no member of the committee can have more eeling, or a stronger desire for the safety and continuance of the Union, than the humble individual who now address you. The bones of my ancestors sleep beneath the sod of New England, and I have kindred blood in almost every State north of the Potomac. More than twenty years of the first part of my life were spent in the far North, in the State which, politically—of course, in party politics—has acquired and well deserves the flattering cognomen of *The star that never sets*. To that gallant and patriotic State, although widely from her ews in regard to slavery, I am strongly attached. For-

"Lives there a man with soul so dead, Who never to himself bath said, This is my own, my native land?"

claim, however, as my country, a land not limited by the Confines of a single State, but coextensive with this broad Union—the land of Washington and Henry, of Laurens and Marion, of Hancock and Adams, as well as that of Allen, and the more obscure, but romantic and daring Boone.

But, sir, my regard for the State of my birth is not incon

sistent with loyalty and devotion to that of my adoption. For more than thirty years I have been a citizen of the brave, generous, and patriotic State of Kentucky, and have been treated with all the kindness of a native son. To Kentucky I am bound, not only by all the ties of interest, and honor, and gratitude, but by every tie of feeling and affection which can be entwined around the human heart. And whatever may be her course in regard to the present controversy, or in future trials, I will ray, in the expressive language of one of old, "Where thou goest I will go, and where thou liest I will lie; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

THE CUBAN EXPEDITION .- One of the invaders, Richrdson Hardy by name, writing to a Cincinnati paper from Florida, gives this account of the famous expedition:

"The Southern papers contain many accounts of the ex-pedition, its outfit, numbers, achievements at Cardenas, and escape from the combined navies of three or four great nations. I notice in them many great mistakes, and some gross misrepresentation; the latter particularly in the Savannah Georgian, the editor of which got his information in an interview with General Lopez. The general, in his desper-ation, is very ungenerously endeavoring to throw the blame of failure on the American officers and soldiers, saying that it was in consequence of their refusal to follow him to another point on the island, after leaving Cardenas. We did refuse to follow him—refuse again to put our lives in his hands, after he had led us to a place where, had we remained five hours longer, the army would have been destroyed to a man-as, if we could not retreat, every American was determined treets of Cardenas. General Lopez will not deny that. I myself handed him a despatch from a friendly Creole, informalry and artillery, would be upon us before the next morn-What chance would there have been for our five hund undisciplined men-without a single piece of artilleryagainst such a force, in a country with which we were entirely unacquainted, and without the least assistance from the Creoles, for whose liberty we were fighting. I write what I mphatically know, when I say that after the affair at Cardenas, both officers and men lost all confidence in General Lopez, his promises, and the patriotism of the people of Cuba. No doubt, they wanted freedom, admired republican institu-tions, and emulated the glory of the American character; tions, and emulated the glory of the American character; but no one who saw the citizens of Cardenas on Sunday, the 19th of May last, neat, trimly dressed, stepping about like dancing masters, will ever say that they will fight for independence—it is even doubtful whether they deserve liberty, or would know how to appreciate it as a gift. This was ample cause for our refusal to follow General Lopez further." "As one of those who, completely deceived and misin-formed, took an active part in getting up the Kentucky regiment, I feel inexpressible remorse on account of the suffering and privations which the failure of the expedition has entaile upon all; and for the sad fate of some of my best and bravest friends."

SPEECH OF Mr. DUER. OF NEW YORK, On the President's California Message

House of Representatives, April 10, 1850. Mr. DUER speke substantially as follows : Mr. Chairman Mr. DUER space substantially as follows: Mr. Chairman, a new question has arisen—a question, I believe, never before formally presented and discussed in Congress. The gentleman who has just taken his seat (Mr. Ross) has alluded to an incident of an early period of the session, when one of the Representatives of Georgia declared himself, in certain contingencies, for disunion, and another Representative of the same State (Mr. Stephens) reiterated the declarations of his collegues declarations which gave me pain because the collegue. colleague-declarations which gave me pain, because I knew that both of those gentlemen not only possessed great talents and influence, but had boldly and successfully resisted, in the last Congress, a movement similar to that to which they have now seemed willing to lend themselves. The gentleman from Pennsylvania, in whose mind seem singularly and indissolu-bly connected the ideas of the Union and of the predominance of a particular party in the Union, has chosen to select for illustration the instance of prominent Whigs. It is well understood, however, here that there is no material difference in this respect between the gentlemen referred to and the great mass of Southern Democratic members; while several of the latter have publicly assumed, and others are known to of the latter have publicly assumed, and others are known to maintain, positions greatly in advance. Those contingencies upon which the gentlemen from Georgia have pronounced for disunion, may or may not happen—it is not, perhaps, now very probable that they will happen—others, however, have placed their opposition to the Union upon grounds which, if they shall be adhered to, and if they shall be able to induce those whom they represent to adopt their views, must inevi-tably place them in a hostile attitude to their Government. For California, with her boundaries, will be admitted into the Union; and you will have no establishment of slavery, or, if you prefer the phrase, no recognition of the constitu-tional existence of slavery in any part of these Territories, north or south, or east or west of any line of latitude or lo gitude. Neither will you have a repeal of any existing law prohibiting slavery. Such, at least, is my judgment.

We heard a great deal in the last Congress about "the

odious Wilmot proviso." To listen to Southern gentlemen then, one would not suppose that they were contending for slavery, but that they were simply resisting offensive and un-constitutional prohibitory legislation. It was at the means, not the end, that their invectives were hurled. Now, howevnot the end, that their invectives were hursed. Now, however, they tell us that what they want is to carry their negro slaves into these Territories, and that the perticular mode in which they may be prevented from doing this is to them a matter of supreme indifference. I always had a notion that this was what they wanted. I am glad that it is now frankly avowed. It relieves us from the scrutiny of a great quantity of metaphysical subtlety. It is not only, too, the more manly was the same to me scan to be nutting their case were the way, but it seems to me even to be putting their case upon the strongest ground. It enables them to discuss it upon its merits, as has been done with great ability by several gentlemen, and among others, by the gentleman from Georgia, (Mr. Toomes.) Some gentlemen have even been pleased to speak of the Wilmot provise in a kind and liberal way, for which I feel grateful. I believe that there are those who would prefer it. Nevertheless, as its adoption might place a power to do mischief in the hands of persons unfriendly to the Union, I am disposed to inquire whether the necessity for its enactment may not be avoided.

What is the Wilmot proviso ' It is an instrumentality-a

satisfied with that vote. I know it was an honest vote; I may be unreasonably angry; the same passions exist every think, under the circumstances, it was a bold one. I was where; and, if at the South they are more easily excited, think, under the circumstances, it was a bold one. I was quite aware of all the hazards to which, personally, it exposed me; but I thought it important that the movement should be promptly arrested, and I was willing for that purpose to en-counter them. I thought that there were other perils that way ; perils to California, perils to the Union. I may perhaps bring my judgment into contempt with some gentlemen by saying so, but such is my opinion. It is the opinion of the ablest and most experienced statesmen in the country. I was determined that I would not, for an abstraction, for no practical purpose whatever, involve the country in such danger. was determined that I would not, directly or indirectly, give "aid and comfort" to those whom I believed to nourish designs hostile to the Union. It was my policy to strengthen

great good. It has done precisely what I, for one, intended and desired it should do. It has disarmed disunionists; it has stripped them of their power. We all feel and know this. The scheme for a Southern Confederacy has received a fatal arrow in its side—lethalis arundo. And the Nash-vou may thus force one of the great parties at the North into prove but the expiring wick of the candle.

It has pleased the honorable member from Ohio to impute

venal motives to those who voted to lay his resolution upon the table-a desire to secure Executive favor. It is imposible for any man in public life to escape such imputation. There is scarcely a vote he can give, such are the difference of opinion, of which the motive may not be pure and may not be base. He must ordinarily trust for his vindication to the reputation he may have established. As one of those implicated, I feel that there is nothing in my character to which the charge of the honorable member from Ohio will adhere. None who have known me, wherever I have lived, and whose good opinion I regard, will believe that I have acted, or am capable of acting, upon this question from sordid motives. And I may be pardoned, under the circumstances, the egotism of saying, since, for my action in this did motives. And I may be pardoned, under the circumstances, the egotism of saying, since, for my action in this
matter, I have been pretty extensively denounced in a class
of newspapers, that I came here at the commencement of this
session fully appreciating the critical condition of the country
with respect to this question of slavery, and determined, so
far as a man can analyze his motives, to act for the real and far as a man can analyze his motives, to act for the real an permanent good of the country, and to make all personal con siderations and all partisan considerations subordinate to that end. I came, quite conscious of the humbleness of my po sition—to speak, and to act, and to vote, according to my best judgment, for justice and for the Union. Others have brought to that task high gifts, and power and influence to which I have no claim; none more singleness of purpose. I impute corrupt motives to no man here; not because I

suppose that such motives may not exist, and are not indeed pretty certain to exist in any body of two hundred and thirty men, nor because I may not perhaps sometimes think that am able to de:ect them; but because it is forbidden to do so, as well by the rules of parliamentary propriety as by the rule that regulate the intercourse of gentlemen. It is for even member of the House to choose in this respect his course. that regulate the intercourse of gent make no such imputations. But does the honorable member from Ohio suppose—patriotic as doubtless he is—that if I others were disposed to do so, there is any thing in the position of himself, and of those who, like him, deal in menacing tones and gestures, and assume a general supervision over Northern constituencies—holding suspended over our heads the thunders of popular indignation, and standing ready, spades in hand, to dig our political graves—does he suppose there is any thing in that position that protects its occupants against similar attacks? Is there no meanness but that of seeking Executive favor? Is there no baseness but that of which a public man may be guilty ? May not favor be else where sought by unworthy arts? And is there not a species of mental prostitution, that traffics in false and exaggerated sentiments, simulates hatreds and unworthy passions, and panders to vitiated tastes, that is quite as degrading to the individual, and more dangerous to the State, than the paltrines that sells a vote for an office? I respect an earnest aboli tionist, I respect an earnest disunionist, as I respect every thing that is genuine—if for nothing else, because it is genuine. But I have an opinion that there are those, North and South, who, incapable of rising to the height of a political question, seek only, in sectional agitation, the mean rewards of a low ambition. So when the wind was high on the seashore I have seen the seagulls wheel and scream; they seem to share the spirit of the storm ; and yet all the while they are only intent on securing their prey, to which their instinct eaches them that the season is favorable. My action in this matter has not escaped a construction

that is not, it appears to me, very libera', in another quarter.

The gentleman from Alabama, (Mr. Hilliand,) incapable of intentional discourtesy or injustice, in commenting upon a letter written by me, and defeuding myself sgainst an attack made upon me in a Whig newspaper, has been able to discover for my course no other than a sectional motive. He applies to it, in very complimentary language, a comparison drawn from the art of war. Certainly the feeling by which I was governed was any thing bat military or aggressive. The gentleman will not deny that the vote I gave was a national vote; but he objects to arguments intended to reconcile that vote to a section. In this I may differ somewhat from the honorable gentleman. He abounds in national and patriotic sentiments, clothed in very beautiful language; but, so far as have observed, he has never given a vote that was likely to blace him in any difficulty at home. Let not my friend from Alabama—if he will permit me to call him so—mistake me I think that I do him justice. I believe that he is a friend to the Union, a man of the nation; and I can apprecia e the difthe Union, a man of the nation; and I can apprecia e the difficulties and emi-arrassments arising from a geographical position. But let me suggest, in all kindness, that in certain emergencies one act involving some personal bazard is worth an abundance of lofty sentiments.

It is of little consequence how I may stand upon this question, except to those whom I immediately represent. Never-

struction—of which I might point to various instar-have a natural desire to relieve my position of any am that may be attached to it. I have been ready from ginning of this session, and I am ready now, to place the set thement of this question upon a constitutional principle—th principle that the people of a Territory, in establishing constitution for their government as a State, have the right to establish or to prohibit slavery as they may please. I was ready to do this before I read, or had heard any intimation of the contents of the suppositions of the the contents of the annual message of the President, or of the California message; I am not the less ready to do so not California message; I am not the less ready to do so now that I know that my opinion has sanction in so high a quarter. I have considered with attention and respect the propositions that have emanated from several eminent gentlement for the adjustment of this question; but I will say that I have no where seen anything that in my judgment is so wise and so just as the plan submitted to us by the President in the message now under consideration. And in speaking of the plan of the President, I have in view the principle to which he refers us. I am aware that, strictly speaking, the President has presented no plan, but rather an idea; and has very properly deferred entirely to the legislative branch of the Government the consideration of time and mode, and the arrangement of details. It seems to me erroneous to say that the policy of the President settles nothing; that it is a policy of inaction. On the contrary, it has an advantage, in this respect, policy of the President settles nothing; that it is a policy of inaction. On the contrary, it has an advantage, in this respect, over every other plan—it settles the question, and it is the only plan that settles it. It is not a policy of inaction. Though it does not absolutely demand, yet it admits of action, and immediate action. We may give finality to the policy when we please; and, for one, I am ready, and think it most wise, to do so now. In plain words, I am ready to vote for a full supharizing the people of New Mexica to form and a bill authorizing the people of New Mexico to form a con-stitution for their government as a State, and declaring that stitution for their government as a state, and declaring massupon their adoption of a constitution, republican in its form, they shall thereupon and thereby be one of the States of the Union. Such a bill should contain a provision, as matter of preliminary arrangement, for the extinguishment, upon just terms, and with the assent of Texas, of her claim to a portion of the territory. A provision of that character appears, indeed, of the territory. A provision of that character appears, indeed, to be necessary, whether we adopt the State or the Territorial plan, since, in either case, we ought to know what it is for which we are legislating. I do not think it doubtful that we may make a proposition to Texas which she will not reject. Pass such a bill, and the question is settled, irrevocably settled, settled by an irrepealable law; and before the meeting of another Congress, New Mexico will be one of the States of the Union.

is, that it involves no sectional triumph; calls for no sur-render of any principle that has been contended for, either by the North or by the South; is founded upon no compromises but those of the constitution itself. As a necessary consequence, it must quiet agitation; for the question being settled, and settled in such manner as to leave no sting behind,

agistion must expire for want of aliment.

Compare now, in these respects, the plan of the President with the plan for a Territorial Government. A Territorial bill must either contain, or it must not contain, a prohibition of slavery. If it contain such a prohibition, its passage would be regarded as a northern triumph. So far as it would operate in such case to prevent the extension of slavery to fee territory I should approve it; but insofar as it would do this in a manner—unhappily, without, in my opinion, just cause—offensive to the South, I should regret it. We all understand this; and it is the less necessary to enlarge upon means to attain a certain end. I have no superstitious veneration for the form. That which is the best means at one time may not be so at another.

Some months ago one of the Representatives of Ohio (Mr. Root) introduced a resolution, instructing the Committee on Territories to bring in a bill establishing territorial governments in all that part of the new territories not included within the boundaries of California, and prohibiting slavery therein. I voted, in a small minority of the Northern members—I believe there were but two Northern Whigs (my colleagues) who voted with me—to lay that resolution upon the table. I am satisfied with that vote. I know it was an honest vote: I think under the contract of the contract of the contract of agitation may be shifted. The North as well as the South may be unacceptable occurrence. Suppose, then, that your bill contains no such prohibition. Suppose, then, that your bill contains no such prohibition. Would not its passage under such circumstances be equally regarded as a Southern triumph—as a surrender by the North —as an abandonment by the North of a principle to which almost every. Northern State stands solemnly committed? Nor would the exasperated feeling thus produced want a tangible subject for agitation. Your bill would be no settlement; it would leave the question open—open to another Congress, and to yet another to be elected under a new census. We must not be misled by looking only to the present; the scene of agitation may be shifted. The North as well as the South

they are not less durable in colder regions.

Besides, we must look beyond the intrinsic merits of measure, in order to form a judgment of its consequences we must look to collateral circumstances. I will not say that such a bill might not be passed by a majority, so strong and so composed of men from both sections of the Union, and from both the great political parties, that its friends would be able to put down agitation. But how is your majority likely to be composed? You will not restore harmony to the Union. by any measure of which one of the proposed effects is the establishment of one of the parties of the nation upon the ruins of the other. It is impossible to shut our eyes to the signs hostile to the Union. It was my policy to strengthen our friends in the South—not to place weapons in the hands of our enemies.

I do not doubt that the vote, the final vote by which "Root's resolution" was laid upon the table, and in which I regret that accident prevented me from taking part, has done great good. It has done precisely what I, for one, intended and desired it should do. It has disarmed disquiponists, it is a construct the researce of the bill. In such case, the bers to ensure the passage of the bill. In such case, the you may thus force one of the great parties at the North into a position of anti-slavery agitation? That it may be joined a position of anti-slavery agitation? That it may be joined not only by all the abolitionists and free-soilers, but by a large section of the other party? That the cry of "repeal" may be raised? And that, all other questions being merged in this, two parties geographically divided may take the place of the present national parties, and the unhappy sectional controversy already existing thus reach a height more dangerous than ever? I should deeply regret this, but I should be powerless as an individual to prevent it; I fear those vastly my superiors might be equally powerless. If there be those who look without regret to such a state of things, I certainly am not of them. I point to the danger that it may be averted.

There is another recommendation which the plan of the There is another recommendation which the plan of the President possesses. If the people of New Mexico be ready and willing, as I believe they are, to come into the Union

> ence to the general course of our Government. New Mexico has now a population with which no State has ever been refused admission into the Union—a population more than sufficient to entitle her to one member of the House of Representatives. Can we reject her on account of the character of her population? It is true her citizens are not Americans by birth, but they are Americans by treaty; and I do not think birth, but they are Americans by treaty; and a control that in the spirit of the treaty we can make a discrimination against them for that reason. If these are sufficient grounds for her rejection, her admission may be delayed indefinitely. The proportion which her numbers bear to the representative The proportion which her numbers bear to the representation is not likely to increase; nor is it probable that the character of her population will essentially change, since there is nothing to carry Americans there, with or without any particular species of property. I doubt whether her case will be stronger fifty years hence than it is now.

will be stronger fifty years hence than it is now.

These, then, are the recommendations of the policy of the President. It is demanded by the spirit of a treaty; it rests on a constitutional principle; it involves no sectional triumph, requires no abandonment of principle; it settles the question irrevocably, quiets agitation, and restores harmony to the Union.

Is there any reason why the South should reject it? What is it that you desire? The preservation of the Union upon just terms? That is, I doubt not, what the great majority of you, and a majority perhaps still greater of your constituof you, and a majority perhaps still greater of your constituents, sincerely desire. Well, in this way, you will preserve and strengthen the Union; and you cannot dispute the jusand strengthen the Union; and you cannot dispute the justice of the terms. They are in accordance with principles which the South has always proclaimed, and which especially have received the emphatic sanction of the imminent individual—who was Southern if any thing be so—whese death we have lately deplored. Do you desire to enjoy your property at home, in quiet and without agitation? You will thus attain that end. Many Southern gentlemen have said to us, that slavery can never enter New Mexico, and that conquently the Wilmot proviso was a mere abstraction; and that for the North, therefore, to insist upon it, was to insist upon a measure offensive to the South for no practical end. Why, then, if your premises be correct, will you, for an abstraction, then, if your premises be correct, will you, for an abstraction, require an abandonment of principle and consistency, humiliating to the pride of the North? But it is said that it is a principle of which you desire the recognition. You can get no recognition of the principle that Congress may not prohibit slavery in the Territories of the United States. If you will slavery in the Territories of the United States. If you will look at the recent speech of the great Northera statesman, you will find in it any thing but an abandonment of the principle of the ordinance of 1787; you will find, on the contrary, that principle most emphatically asserted. Nor would any vote that you could get here, even expressly repudiating it, be of service to you; for the principle is one that the people of the North will never abandon. On the other hand, by the of the North will never abandon. On the other hand, by the measure I have proposed, you would gain the acknowledgment of a principle not valueless to the South, and that in such a manner and by such a vote as to be of practical use.

such a manner and by such a vote as to be of practical use.

Will Northern Democrats reject the policy of a Southern.

President because it is not sufficiently Southern? Will they substitute for it something that their constituents will segard as more favorable to the South—more favorable to slavery? Are not the terms just? The South at least is estopped from disputing their justice. Will you allege that you fear a dissolution of the Union? A dissolution of the Union because we authorize the people of a Territory to form a constitution preparatory to their admission into the Union as a State! They who would dissolve the Union for such a cause must belong to the class of nondescripts lately discovered by an old gentleman may be willing to make sacrifices, sacrifices of personal feeling, of ambition, of consistency, of principle even, for the sake of restoring harmony to the Union; but be-